

April 4, 2008

The Honorable Frances M. Tydingco-Gatewood  
Chief Judge  
District Court of Guam  
4th Floor, U.S. Courthouse  
520 W. Soledad Avenue,  
Hagatna, Guam 96910

**FILED**  
DISTRICT COURT OF GUAM

JUL 25 2008 *rubor*

**JEANNE G. QUINATA**  
Clerk of Court

RE: United States v. Juan C. Tenorio and Charlene F. Tenorio  
CF 07-00078, District Court of Guam

Dear Judge Tydingco-Gatewood,

I met Charlene Tenorio almost two years ago when I was in the process of getting a half-blind, half-starved horse out of the Southern Comfort Ranch.

It was a truly unreasonable thing to do. What would I do with a horse? Where would I put it? Charlene had the only ranch I knew of, and she was willing to help a fellow horse-lover do the ridiculous. "I'll help you however I can," she said.

And so she has. For the last two years, Charlene has fed and boarded my miserable, cantankerous mare. Charlene has charged me the least she can possibly charge, and I'm sure she's losing money on my horses (now plural--the half-dead mare was pregnant!). Charlene has assumed liability that is really mine; she has never charged me for physical damages--to herself or her property--always saying, "A horse is an accident waiting to happen."

What Charlene does for me and my horses she has done many times over for many people in the 30 years that she has kept horses on Guam. The mere fact that she has kept horses that long on Guam is a testimony to her faithfulness and her managerial skills. It takes a tremendous amount of time to care for the animals, and it's very expensive. She has made many sacrifices to keep the horses, which are the best fed and best bred on on this island.

She has a heart for the forgotten, animals and humans alike. Hurting and impossible animals, and hurting, impossible people are always in her care. Recently when I stopped at the ranch, for example, I found a near-dead cat she was trying to save. This is one of the untold numbers of animals from birds to horses that she has tried to save over the years.

~~Since I've known her, I've also watched her work~~ with an several of those whom the world would term "losers." I myself am a bit of a loser when it comes to horses--I am drawn more by love than by skill. I'm a bit of a klutz with them. But she has always been patient with me.

I've seen her dealings with her on-again, off-again ranch hand. The man has

few marketable skills, and could not hold a job elsewhere. He has been a constant trial—he once stole expensive equipment from Charlene and she said he would not work for her again. But she forgave him, and he's back again, on and off. She even allows him to use her washer and refrigerator. She is patient and long-suffering.

In addition to this ranch hand, she's worked with other young men who have come from troubled backgrounds, trying to teach them responsibility. One day a young man who appeared developmentally disabled stopped by the ranch and told me that he had worked for her in the past.

Charlene has taught hundreds of young people how to ride and care for horses. She is an exacting teacher, who demands discipline and obedience in her students. I know she demands this of herself as well.

I don't know all of her involvements over the years. I know she was very involved in 4-H. She faithfully attends church.

In all my dealings with Charlene, I have found her honest and above board, and very generous. I consider it a privilege to work with her and I am blessed to have my animals in her care.

In this world of people who often spend their lives clawing to the top without regard for the lives of the lowly, Charlene Tenorio is a shining exception. She is in all respects a good and decent person with a heart of compassion.

I am grateful that a half-blind horse enabled me to see such honest and humble character on Guam. I am honored to know her.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Helen W. Middlebrooke". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a long, sweeping underline.

Helen W. Middlebrooke

freelance writer and columnist